

THE OLD PATROON

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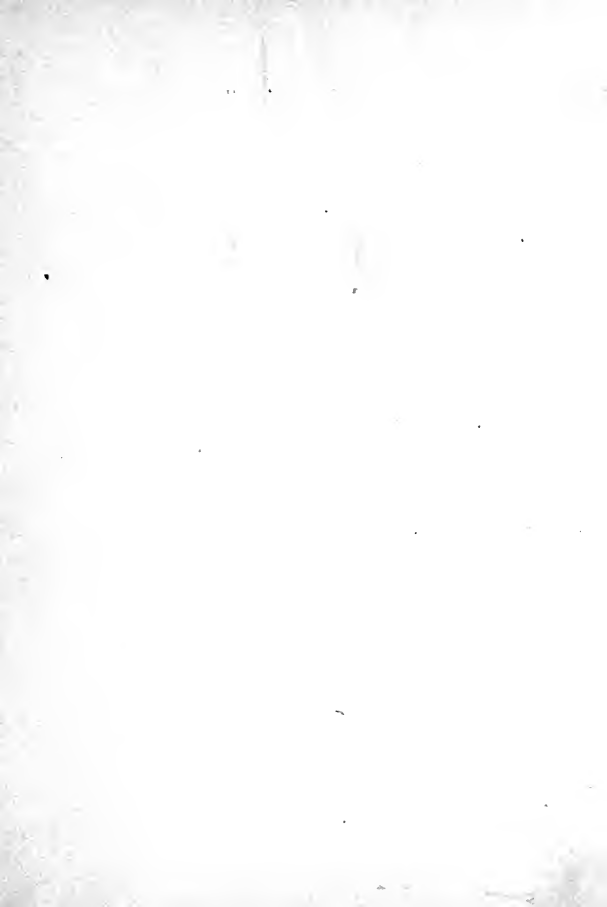
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THE OLD PATROON

AND OTHER PLAYS

BY

GEORGE STANISLAUS CONNELL



NEW YORK

WILLIAM H. YOUNG & COMPANY

1899

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THE OLD PATROON.

CHARACTERS.

GERRIT VAN ALST, "*the Old Patroon.*"

DIRK VAN WIE, *burgher.*

CAPTAIN GLEN, *a young officer.*

MASTER BARLOW, *of New York.*

'ZEKIEL, *negro servant.*

MISTRESS MATTY, *an English maiden.*

DAME MARIAN, *her mother.*

DAME LOUISA, *Matty's aunt.*

JUDY, *wife of 'Zekiel.*

TOWNSPEOPLE, etc.

Scene, Schenectady ;

Period, about 1730 ;

Time for representation, one hour.

THE OLD PATROON.

SCENE—A street in the outskirts of an old Dutch-colonial town. House, LC, with low "stoop" having a narrow seat either side of doorway. Half-doors. Flower garden hidden by hedge, RC. Large tree with bench encircling it, R.

Enter GERRIT VAN ALST *and* 'ZEKIEL.

'ZEKIEL. Massa Gerrit, 'jes' yo' lean all yo' weight on dis yere chile ; I'se ony a brack nigger, an' I'se a'gittin' ole, but my legs is mos' better dan a flea's. An' yo' 'member, Massa Gerrit, yo' say I'se de on'y heart dat lub yo' now.

GERRIT VAN ALST. That's true, boy ; and when we oust these English robbers, and the good old stock of New Amsterdam comes into its own again

you shall have a fine blue livery all trimmed with Dutch galloon straight from old Holland. Now fetch the grub-ax and tend the flowers a little. I can't afford to waste so much time over them.

'ZEKIEL. Is yo' a'gwine to let yo' flowers die, Massa Gerrit?

GERRIT VAN ALST. Not a bit of it! And mind you keep them as well as they are now! But down there on the Green to-day the town will put me in office for another year, and it is about time I gave up playing with flowers as any child might. 'Zekiel, you don't know what ambition is, my boy.

'ZEKIEL. Oh, yis I does, Massa!

GERRIT VAN ALST. Hey-diddle-diddle! You have no ambition, 'Zekiel.

'ZEKIEL. Yis I hab, Massa!

GERRIT VAN ALST. What is it?

'ZEKIEL. Wull, it jes' dis way. You

know Judy am a'gittin' ole an' superammunated, an' she hab' a misery in 'e back mos' de whole time, an' yo' 'Zekiel always take ambition on po' sick folk—'specially when de folks be he own 'ooman. Judy say I hab mo' ambition she nebber *did* see, fur I tuk de chores right out of um harnds yister-day an' scrub de big iron kittle, an' druv ole Mistis Verveelen geese out de kibbage patch, an' swep' out de cock-loft. An' I'se a'gwine to do all de fixin' an' fussin' right 'long now, an' Judy she kin jes' sit 'roun' an' tek care o' hersel' like 's if she war a lady. She di'n't want let me do it, but at de eend she promise, an' I say "Swar!" an' she say "Lordy gracious!" Oh yis, dere be a heap o' ambition in yo' 'Zekiel ole heart, Massa Gerrit.

GERRIT VAN ALST. Well, if you take to cooking and burn by suppawn, you'll suffer for it. Go along now and

get me my pipe ; I'll take a nap here on the stoop.

(Exit 'ZEKIEL into house.

Townspeople pass R to L, saluting.

Enter DIRK VAN WIE, R.)

DIRK VAN WIE. Guten dag, Excellency. May I valk vid you down to der Green for der elegtions? Dose poys vould fire de old demi-culverin dat vas captured from de French, und I vould consult vid you how much of powder to put in id.

GERRIT VAN ALST. Fire the demi-culverin, Dirk? What for? Are there any French and Indians,—is there a mutiny?

DIRK VAN WIE. Dey say dey joost vould celebrate der elegtions.

GERRIT VAN ALST. Humbug, Dirk ! Do they know how much that foolish firing would cost, and how many wolves they could shoot with the powder if they put it into their muskets?

DIRK VAN WIE. I told dem so, Excellency, but dey joost maagd a choke at me, und vould know if I vas gedding old und useless now.

GERRIT VAN ALST. They're getting old themselves! And they never were anything but useless!

DIRK VAN WIE. Und some of dose English gallants maagd fun about our good Dutch prayers for de blessing of Heaven over de elegtions.

GERRIT VAN ALST. Donner! Dirk Van Wie, you tell those runagates that I forbid their firing the culverin—I, Gerrit Van Alst. And if they want to blaspheme or to ridicule our good old customs tell them they can go to their own Albany, where they'll have plenty of their own upstart kind to appreciate them. And wait—if they say again that you are growing old and useless—just come to me and I'll make you the town's rate assessor for five years.

DIRK VAN WIE. Your Excellency vill not gum to der elegtions?

GERRIT VAN ALST. No, Dirk; the old wound in my knee has rebelled against parading and speech-making to-day. But tell the boys to abide by the laws, for if there's turbulence I'll hear of it, and, Dutch or English, the culprit shall pay!

(*Exit* DIRK VAN WIE, *L.*

'ZEKIEL has meanwhile returned with the pipe.)

GERRIT VAN ALST. Come, 'Zekiel, my boy, what's the matter with that coal? you're slow getting a light to-day.

'ZEKIEL. Dat so, Massa Gerrit. I'se ony a po' ole nigger,—but ef yo' jes' wanted yo' could git some nice white pusson could light a pipe wi' dey eye jes' as quick as a wink.

GERRIT VAN ALST. What is that, 'Zekiel? Light a pipe with their eyes?

'ZEKIEL. Yis, Massa Gerrit, an' warm

yo' all up wi' de light from dem—dey is eyes like dat, Massa Gerrit. An' yo' could hab de pick o' dem all ef yo' ony say so.

GERRIT VAN ALST. You mean I should marry, eh 'Zekiel? Now, why have you said that so often the last few years?

'ZEKIEL. Wull, Massa Gerrit, in de bible dat yo' read for me an' Judy ebery night all de folks of any 'count hab got married when dey done git ole enough. Dere's Adam, he hab a wife when he done got ole enough, an' Abram, he hab a wife when he done got ole enough, an' Jacob, he hab a wife when he done got ole enough, an' dey war all 'spec'able folks. But de bible don' say Esau hab any wife, an' he sole he birfdays fur a mass o' potash, an' it don' say Cain hab any wife, an' he kill 'um brudder. Now, Massa Gerrit, yo' done got ole enough.

GERRIT VAN ALST, (*laughing*). 'Zekiel, I'm not old enough, and you can't make me believe I am. If I'm a little forgetful now and again that's only natural, considering all I have to occupy my thoughts,—and this old wound doesn't trouble me often. No, 'Zekiel, I need no one but you and Judy to take care of me; and as for bright eyes to light my pipe with, listen and I'll dream aloud for you a little of the past:

Beside our old Dutch church, long, long ago,

—Perhaps the belfry swallows yet remember, —

A noisy youngster burst upon the world

With shouts of boyish glee and mad bravado.

An only child, he ruled the little household,

Taxing an angel-mother's love and kisses

With spendthrift confidence. And as
 he grew,
Schenectady's old burghers at their
 pipes
Talked proudly of his future for the
 state.
Some fifty years agoe our bowling
 green
Saw him acclaimed a schepen of the
 town,
And, half in sport, old Jan Van Tien-
 hoven
Planted the tented elm that stands
 there now,
Saying that as it grew to shield and
 shade,
So should the day's young hero serve
 the state.
In time the English came. New Am-
 sterdam—
New York, as they would dub it,—fed
 its eyes
On scarlet vest and pretty petticoat,

And old Schenectady, good, loyal
Dutch,
Sent there her chosen son to plead her
cause.—

I know not, 'Zekiel, if love be blind,
As heathen poets tell us, but a lover
Is rebel to all law save love alone.
And so, although the British blood and
Dutch
Were meant to mingle but as air and
water,
A fair young English maid with April
eyes
Of ever-changing passion won the
heart
Schenectady alone had right to rule.

'ZEKIEL. An' dat war you, Mass'
Gerrit?

GERRIT VAN ALST. Yes, 'twas I.

'ZEKIEL. But ef yo' lubbed her so
why din't yo' tell her dat she could
marry yo'?

GERRIT VAN ALST. Ah, 'Zekiel,

boy, I loved her dearly,—love unwary, lavish.—She took a red-coat captain for her husband and sailed beyond the seas.

'ZEKIEL. Wull, Massa Gerrit, ef she don' lub yo',—what yo' waiting fur?

GERRIT VAN ALST. 'Zekiel, I love her yet.—But enough! A sentimental statesman is as big a failure as a timid soldier. Broken hearts will be mended in heaven, but on earth ambition's the sovereign balm—ambition! To-day they're re-electing me a burgomaster of Schenectady. Next fall half the colony will hail me in the Assembly of New Amsterdam, and 'Zekiel, this time I'll go to fight—to fight for our old traditions and the rights of New Netherland. Who knows, boy, there may be another Dutch governor before many years! God never meant the red-coats should prosper very long. They succeed sometimes—sometimes. But the Dutch are true and faithful,

and in Heaven—in Heaven—(*falls asleep*).

'ZEKIEL, (*working over the flower-bed*). In Heaben dey done got all de Dutch gubbernors, Massa, an' I 'low as how de English gubbernors'll hab to go—back again to England. Dutch gubbernors is a heap better, an' my ole Unc' Azra say he done see two Dutch gubbernors eat a whole ox at a bar-becue, all by themselves. (GERRIT VAN ALST *snores*.) Yis, Massa, a whole ox, out-tekk'n' de hoofs an' de horns.—Yaas, Massa, bible troof, 'fore de Lord! —Wull, Massa Gerrit! Ef yo' gwine be a'snoozin' an' a'snoozin' yo' ole 'Zekiel hab no mo' to say!

(*Exit 'ZEKIEL through garden. Enter, R, MATTY, BARLOW and CAPT. GLEN, marching.*)

CAPT. GLEN, (*marking the step*).
Hep! Hep! Hep!—Indeed, Mistress Matty, your rustic cavalier is too am-

bitious. (*Airily, though with habitual drawl.*) Had he been born under Mars instead of somewhere beneath the Great Bear we could all put the right foot forward together without his awkward pause spoiling the step. (*To BARLOW.*) Your method of progression, my young friend, is imperfect, and if you would abate the heavenly rolling of your eyes and the infernal rolling of your gait you would remind us less of a cork in a duck-pond. I trust for your sake that those soulful glances are all lost, for such a deal of good looks must certainly damn your ill favor!

MATTY, (*laughing*). In truth, Captain Glen, that is rare advice! Master Barlow is merely colonial-bred, and so his manners smell of hay-time rather than "Hep!" time!

BARLOW, (*with injured dignity*). You proffered *me* the honor, Mistress Matty, to escort you to the Green.

MATTY. What ! Master Barlow, are your manners as bad as that ! *Mistress Matilda* is my name, so please you.

BARLOW, (*bitterly*). Pray overlook my freedom, for in view of our eight months' acquaintance in New York my privilege seemed no less than his you've hardly seen—at least, so I thought.

MATTY, (*derisively*). Think again, Master Barlow !

CAPT. GLEN. Don't think so any more, Master Barlow ! And now, *Mistress Matty*, may I escort you ? And, sir, when you've learned your lesson of colonial respect, acquired some polish, and attained a greater legal eminence than you now enjoy you may find us more indulgent, feel us less critical and hear us say, without an incredulous smile, "*Your Honor*" !

BARLOW, (*angrily*). Is my honor your jest to be played upon at will ?

CAPT. GLEN, (*tantalizingly*). If I

touch upon the subject are you wise to rail about it? When you play upon a drum it sounds because it is hollow; so, my joke has barely left my lips when you proclaim yourself beaten!

BARLOW, (*furious*). To your guard, sir! Let us see if your sword be as quick as your tongue!

MATTY, (*apprehensively*). Oh gentlemen, pray be calm!

CAPT. GLEN, (*coolly*). No cause for alarm, Mistress Matty. A colonial citizen it is needless to disarm. Shall we proceed?

BARLOW. No! You must fight, you coward! Flamingo! I'll preen your plumage for you! Petticoat soldier! Come, let's put a placket in your breeches!

CAPT. GLEN, (*mildly surprised*). Zounds! The little cur can bite.

(*They begin a duel; MATTY screams.*)

GERRIT VAN ALST, (*awakened and coming down*).

What ! Fighting here upon the public way !

Is this a cock-pit ? You defy the town ?

Schenectady has suffered daily insult
And borne it with the dignity of silence.

But not till now was brawling in the streets

Ranked as a privilege within her laws !

CAPT. GLEN.

Sir, I am Captain Glen, an English officer.

Stand back !

GERRIT VAN ALST, (*facing him*).
And I am Gerrit Van Alst, a Dutchman,
As well you know, and trustee eighteen years

Here in Schenectady. I make the laws
And with the help of God I'll see them kept !

You, Captain Glen, an English officer,
And neighbor though you be, shall pay
for this

And half a hundred past unnoted
pranks.

Within the month our English gov-
ernor

Will find you more congenial residence.
You know my word, so fear my influ-
ence.

(To BARLOW). But you, sir, if there's
breeding in a face,

Were reared for better trade than tiffs
and broils.

From hereabout, I venture, you have
come

To taste of our election holiday,
And found the draught too strong for
good behavior?

BARLOW, (*sulkily*).

I am no bumpkin, sir, but secretary
To this young lady's uncle, an alderman
And merchant of New York.

GERRIT VAN ALST, (*kindly*).

Then take advice

Distilled in sorrow's wine-press. Come,
let's talk.

(*Leads him aside and warns him
against* CAPT. GLEN.)

MATTY, (*surprised*).

Well! This old man leans boldly on
his power.

CAPT. GLEN, (*nettled*).

An old Dutch windmill!

MATTY, (*with aroused curiosity*).

What's his history?

CAPT. GLEN.

Dull as the town's and full as common-
place.

We call him here Schenectady's patroon,
For every year, as regular as frost,
And by a sort of habit long acquired,
These Dutch elect him village autocrat.
He wears the town upon his little finger,
And with that signet makes his humor
law.

BARLOW, (*to GERRIT, impatiently*).
I'll pay it all the thought it may be
worth.

MATTY, (*to GLEN, sarcastically*).
Then you are but a monkey on a stick
For him to dance?

CAPT. GLEN, (*taken aback*).
—To dance with others wooden as my-
self.

Now may I dance with *you* upon the
Green?

MATTY, (*inattentively*).
Well—but I'll make this cavalier my
escort,
—And, if he will, my partner for a
dance.

(*Goes to GERRIT VAN ALST.*)

GERRIT VAN ALST.
My pretty mistress, if a cavalier
Alone can please, I fear lest fitness
grudge
Your bounteous favor, for I never
learned

The minuet; besides,—my dancing
days
Died with a past long dead, my little
girl.

(Seats himself upon the bench by the tree.)

CAPT GLEN, *(to BARLOW)*.
Come, if you'll second me we'll chime
together.
While this young warbler and her base
companion
Descant upon the Dutch, we'll ring the
changes,
We'll change the modes, we'll turn the
scales against them !
Our glee will drown the dumps !

BARLOW, *(gazing back spitefully at
MATTY)*.
With all my heart ! I'd sell my life if
I could—

CAPT. GLEN, *(sarcastically)*.

Bravely spoken !

We'll be two roses on a stem, two sun-
beams,
Two dewdrops in a lily-cup !

(Exeunt, L.)

MATTY.

Yes, let them go; I'll chat a bit with you.
What *did* you dance ?

(Seats herself beside GERRIT)

GERRIT VAN ALST.

I loved a good Dutch reel.

MATTY.

Yes, Captain Glen has told me you are
Dutch.

GERRIT VAN ALST.

My *parents* were, and left me as a pre-
cious heritage

Love for the Fatherland and Holland
ways.

But stands this Captain Glen so well
intrenched

In your good graces ?

MATTY, *(lightly)*.

Oh, my heart is free !

I knew him but by name till yesterday.

My aunt was hungering for his mother's voice,

As old friends will, so that green sprig named Barlow

Was bidden to ease our voyage from New York

And kept the sails blown big with laboring love-sighs.

Whenever we were becalmed a glance at him

Would start us off again ! But Captain Glen

Is such a silly goose, and drawls his words—

Why, taffy pulling isn't half as slow

As coaxing him to coin a compliment.

And all this blessed time, if you'll believe it,

He's not said once he loves me.

GERRIT VAN ALST.

But he does?

MATTY.

Oh, no indeed. Of course he wouldn't mean it.

—That's why I like the Dutch; they never say

They love you when in truth they don't—now *do* they?

GERRIT VAN ALST, (*trying to be impartial*).

Even among the Dutch, my little lady,

There's some base coin,—though rarely have I seen it.

MATTY.

To me the Dutch are honest, true and simple,—

Just like your flowers here. Oh, may I pluck some?

GERRIT VAN ALST.

'Twould yield the fairest tribute to their worth.

(*Aside*) What spell is hidden in this childish prattle

To make my heart-blood course like an
April kill?

It whispered back the spirit of a dream
Buried among the hills of green ambi-
tion ;

It breathed the echo of a clarion
That called gray veteran memories to
arms.

—Yet, if her father be as old as I
He's none too young.—

MATTY, (*among the flowers*).

You know the language that your
flowers speak?

GERRIT VAN ALST.

My flowers speak? No, *I* do all the
talking,

And they just listen when I'm tending
them.

MATTY.

Ah, but they talk *about* you when you
go.

And now I'll tell you what they're gos-
siping :

Here's Crocus lingering—tells of cheerfulness ;

And Jasmine, amiability.

GERRIT VAN ALST, (*good-naturedly*).

Enough !

The little flatterers are fooling you !

MATTY.

These violets relate your modesty ;

The daisies vouch for simple innocence ;

And here beneath is artless Honesty,

Called by no other name. Why, there are pinks !

You must have been in love—or may be now !

GERRIT VAN ALST, (*rising, with affected unconcern*).

Yes, those must be reduced ; they grow too rich.

MATTY.

And here's a tell-tale primrose, yet unopened ;

That means a silent love : and at the back

Are wall-flowers, fidelity unfailing.

GERRIT VAN ALST, (*compelled by his
lame knee to resume his seat*).

My little maid, you have bewitched my
garden,

And surely studied magic over-well.

Love-ribbons, vows, and longing coy-
concealed—

What may not next your oracles betray?
Or moonlight meetings at a kissing-
bridge—

MATTY.

What's that?

GERRIT VAN ALST.

Ah, one thing you will
never learn

Till you are half-way over some Dutch
rillet.

But barter not your heart for any
seeming—

Love never rode upon a merry laugh.

MATTY, (*taking her cue*).

Now I've a flower tells me more of you—

This tearful little yellow asphodel
Whispers a tale of *unrequited* love.
—Did some fair lady win your plighted
faith

To wear it as a love-lorn amulet?
Did some girl write her name within
your life
And lay the story by unread, uncared
for?

Speak to me. See, these soft auriculas
That owe you life mean trust and con-
fidence.

Love me for her; make me your com-
forter.—

Tell me, did some one cheat you of
your heart?

GERRIT VAN ALST, (*reverently*).

An angel out of heaven asked for
it—

God must have known its use.—But
come, your wish

To unlock my secret thoughts and as-
pirations

Has proved a key that fits. Give me
your hand.

Promise you'll be my little friend and
truepenny

Henceforth to the crack of doom !

MATTY, (*eagerly*). I do !

GERRIT VAN ALST.

And that you'll love the Dutch ?

MATTY, (*giving flower*).

This tulip-bud,

Flame-hearted with a golden crown,
shall pledge it.

The flower tells a true love's warm
avowal,—

No less is due Schenectady's Pa-
troon.

GERRIT VAN ALST, (*flattered*).

Tut, tut ! That title's but the free-
heart gift

Of generous neighbors, and upon my
head

It falls unpaid for as a mother's love-
pats.

With *real* patroons it crowned an honored rank,
For our old Dutch West India Company,
Back in the days of loved authorities,
Coined it and stamped it probity and worth.—
That chord contains the key-note of my hopes.
For fame's a martial air that fires the heart
To stride exultant over fallen sorrow.
Ambition leads to victory or death—
A glorious death in honorable fight.
For eighteen years, my pretty Dutch recruit,
I've worked to win for friends my fellow townsmen ;
Counseled their plans, tempered their public wrath,
Borne with their faults and cheered them in their sorrows.

This knee was worsted fighting for
their homes
With Indians tired of English treachery.
At harvest time a new assemblyman
Leaves us to sound abroad our people's
will,
And in the hand of God he'll do his
duty !
He'll plead for public honor, thrift, and
truth—
Plead for the old-time rule of peace
and justice
And neighborly good will. He'll wake
their hearts,
(*Rising*) And, when a wider sphere shall
hail a welcome,
Ready he'll stand to rear the hard-
hewn walls
That sentinel the safety of a state.
—But there, the future cannot dull the
taste
For sweets the present offers.—
(*Cannon heard. MATTY screams.*)

MATTY. What's that?

GERRIT VAN ALST, (*sternly*).

Those reprobates let loose the culverin
Against my orders? They must pay
for that!

MATTY, (*admiringly*).

Now promise me you'll be my own
gallant,
My own knight-errant, shield and cham-
pion!

GERRIT VAN ALST.

I'll be your humble servant little prin-
cess,
And in my heart I'll build a throne for
you.

One only is its queen, but she's away,
And, till she comes—will *you* receive
my homage?

MATTY, (*triumphantly*).

Gladly. I'll make you Lord High Admiral,
And you shall navigate my ship of state.

No one, however favored, shall usurp
Either the fame or duties of your
rank.

(*Enter* DIRK VAN WIE.)

DIRK VAN WIE, (*greatly perturbed*).
Ach! Excellency!—Yet Excellency no
longer. Oh, Herr Van Alst! Vat
duyvil's vork is dis?

GERRIT VAN ALST. What's hap-
pened, Dirk Van Wie?

DIRK VAN WIE. Dose rascal-
lions! Dose English poys! Dey turn
us out of all de offices! I'm no burg-
omaster any more, nor you, nor Pieter
Maerschallck. De Dutch are dying
every day; dese Englishmens are gom-
ing into allerdings!

GERRIT VAN ALST, (*dazed*). They've
—turned us out?

DIRK VAN WIE. Yah! I'm going
to Fort Orange now to-day. I take de
first sheep home to old Holland. New
Amsterdam is in der Duyvil's fist.

Dis is no blace for good peebles.
Coom, ve'll get away!

GERRIT VAN ALST. No, Dirk; the times will change. You know how long we've worked for Dutch representation in the Assembly of the colony. We'll elect our spokesman hardly three months from now. I must be here to undertake it.

DIRK VAN WIE. Dey've chosen him! Dey cast de votes to-day, behind de elegtion of burgomasters! Captain Glen, dat tvist-zoeker, cajoled dem und made dem promises of business und prizes und thalers from some Englishman down in New Amsterdam.

MATTY. Captain Glen? Was Captain Glen elected over everybody?

(Retires and looks off L.)

DIRK VAN WIE. Und now, Herr Van Alst,—dear, good Gerrit, dot ve've known und lofed so long—come mit me back to old Holland—

GERRIT VAN ALST, (*firmly, after regaining composure*). Never, Dirk! Here I was born and here I'll stay, office or no office. And why not stay here with me? What if you were born in Holland; the best years of your life have been here in Schenectady. Stay, and see the Dutch influence leaven our colony. Stay, and see our glorious West India Company resume direction, and peace and honest comfort return. And then, think, Dirk, we love some of the English, and they love us with all their hearts.

DIRK VAN WIE. Dieven! Schobbe-jacken! Blaaskaken! Loosen-shalken! Dot Captain Glen, he maagd a Duyvil's dans-kamer of our elegtions! I said he should not fire der culverin. He pointed a pocket-pistol oud at my head. Den dose scamps und deugenieten fired de culverin und py St. Nicholas der pullet hit dat elm-tree in der middle of it—

dat elm-tree you loved so—und now it vill die vid a hole all de vay oud of it!

GERRIT VAN ALST, (*sadly*). Poor old tree! Even *its* heart was not safe. —But promise me you'll stay, Dirk. I'll show you one case already where our old Dutch virtues have won an English heart. A cheery, lovable girl—(*turns to where MATTY had been sitting*).

DIRK VAN WIE. A girl! Yaas, she'll like de Dutch for schmelkty-nudels and raisin-pie und chincherebread; but tell her to clean off de galousie blinds und — kooockamulto, yoost see how she ben gone!—Ach, haltybissel, mine Gerrit, der goot Dutch girl is goot in der whole year altogedder und der English girl is goot at Paas und Pinxter.—No, I go back to my old home on de Yssel.

GERRIT VAN ALST, (*sadly, but with determination*). And I stay here till our old Dutch honesty returns! We

may not win the offices yet, but we'll conquer the hearts of those about us!

DIRK VAN WIE, (*admiringly grasping his hand*). Gerrit, you ben a crate pig fighting ram-sheep, und I vish I too vas!

(*Exit, R.*)

(*Enter BARLOW and CAPT. GLEN, jubilant.*)

BARLOW.

There she is!

CAPT. GLEN.

Here he is! Trying his influence!
Ha, ha! "You know my word"—now,
old Patroon!

There's a change in the tide, so level
your "influence"

Straight at your rival,—the Man in the
Moon!

MATTY, (*eagerly*).

Let me felicitate you, Captain Glen!

GERRIT VAN ALST.

Young man, weigh well the burden you
would bear,

For honors underrated carry curses.
Jeer, if you must, at Gerrit, the old
Patroon,
But reverence the trust he hoped to
safeguard.

MATTY.

And tell us, Captain, was the dancing
drowned
In other celebration of your triumph?
If not, I hope to try a measure with you.

GERRIT VAN ALST, (*in surprised disappointment*).

Does friendship follow fortune, little
maid?

MATTY, (*embarrassed*).

Oh no,—but then I love the red-coats
so,—

My father was an English officer—
Was stationed in New York long, long
ago—

'Twas then he met my mother—

GERRIT VAN ALST, (*in great emotion*).
At New York?

Her name before she married!—Wait
—in my ear!

MATTY, (*after hastily whispering her
mother's name in his ear*).

Well, Captain Glen, must I *implore*
your notice?

CAPT. GLEN.

Your pardon, but this gentleman re-
quired,

As payment for your uncle's name he
used,

That I should cede to him your com-
pany—

BARLOW, (*exultant*).

And all that he might yield it back
again;

But at its proper worth—for noth-
ing!

GERRIT VAN ALST, (*furiously*).

Sir!!

MATTY, (*humbly*).

Then, Captain, shall we leave?—And,
if you will,

Let's go by way of the bridge.

(Exeunt, L.)

GERRIT VAN ALST, *(enraged)*.

See here, young man—

If time had served us both an equal
portion,

You'd pay for what you've done! *I'd
baste your hide!*

BARLOW, *(sullenly)*.

She is a jilt!

GERRIT VAN ALST.

And you're a coward, sir!

Enough, begone!

(Exit BARLOW, R.)

GERRIT VAN ALST, *(turning sadly
toward his home)*.

'Zekiel!—'Zekiel!—Judy!

JUDY, *(appearing at doorway)*. Yis,
Marster.

GERRIT VAN ALST. Bring me the
grub-ax, Judy, I must work with the
flowers awhile.

JUDY. Why, Marster, 'Zekiel 'lowed

as how you tole him to mind de flowers
after to-day.

GERRIT VAN ALST. No no! They're
too important to be trusted with him.
I'll tend them myself.—I'm going to
raise the best tulips in the Colony—
these great gay ones—"flame hearted
with a golden crown." I'll make them
famous through all New Netherlands.
Down in our old town of New Amsterdam
they may please some chance
visitor from over seas.

(*Enter, R, DAME LOUISA leading DAME
MARIAN, who is blind.*)

DAME LOUISA. Marian, I'm heartily
thankful you had no more daughters,
for another niece like Matilda would
drive my poor head crazy. The Lord
should never have made you blind un-
til she was safely married, for it takes
four eyes to watch her—and even then
she slips away on the sly. I'm con-
vinced, Marian, that we must send

her to bed and take her clothes away.

DAME MARIAN. Sister, she is only a child.

DAME L. Oh, she's old enough to know better. You were only a child once yourself, but you knew enough to marry a brawling tippler that kept his foot upon your neck to the end of his life,—fifteen long years. He tried to get his other foot on my neck, thinking, I suppose, that it was all in the family. But he couldn't play Roman charioteer or Colossus of Rhodes with me!

DAME M. Sister, can you see Matty anywhere?

DAME L. Not a vestige of her. But then it is useless to look in such a quiet spot as this. I know she must be down at the Green.

DAME M. And alone!

DAME L. Oh, don't be afraid; I'll warrant she has escorts enough! Wait

—sit here; I'll ask this old Dutch gardener if he has seen her. (*Sits DAME M., at R., and addresses GERRIT, who is working among his flowers*). Good Sir, have you observed a flighty, light-headed, scatter-brained goose of a girl pass this way?

GERRIT VAN ALST, (*rising*). No, madam, I have not.

DAME L.—A giddy, flippant, pert young miss?

GERRIT VAN ALST. I have not, my good dame.

DAME L.—A silly, laughing, coquetish English maid?

GERRIT VAN ALST. A little English maiden I have seen. Are you—her aunt? She said her aunt came with her.

DAME L. Yes, I am unhappily that aunt. We arrived here scarce twenty-four hours ago, and I declare she has met every man in the place! Do you chance to know where she is now?

GERRIT VAN ALST. She left here to dance upon the Green.

DAME L. Well, she'll dance to bed and nowhere else. If her father were alive to-day I should just like to show him how his love for rioting has borne fruit! Sit there, Marian; I'll fetch the girl and be back in a jiffy.

(Exit, L.)

GERRIT VAN ALST, *(aside)*. Marian! *(Approaching)* Is this the mother of our strayaway?

DAME M.

Yes, I am she. Though in my child's regard

'Twould seem I'm more a keeper than a mother.

GERRIT VAN ALST, *(aside)*.

How altered! Yet—the same!

DAME M. Are you the gardener?

GERRIT VAN ALST.

Yes, I'm a gardener;—*(aside)* that's all.
And fortune,

Perhaps in jest, has left me one poor
gift,

My flowers; let me offer you the rarest.

*(Takes the tulip from his coat and
offers it.)*

(Hurt). You will not take it?

DAME M., *(extending her hand, but
not toward the flower).*

Oh, pray pardon me.

GERRIT VAN ALST, *(aside).*

My God, she cannot see!

*(Takes her hand and closes it about
the flower.)*

DAME M. The flower's trim
And graceful, but a niggard in per-
fume.

GERRIT VAN ALST.

'Tis oft a fault of flowers, and the
gayest

That woo the eye's approval bear no
soul

To make their memory sweet. For
modest worth,

That with a whispered prayer awaits a
lover,
Dwells rather in the blossom half-un-
seen,
A presence felt, a proffer with a
pledge.

DAME M.

Yes, and the world's the same in every
part,—

Perhaps the sun is but a satellite,—
For in the truth you've uttered stands
revealed

The lesson I have conned for twenty
years.

A thoughtless girl, I scorned an honest
man

To wed a rake,—and yet, God rest his
soul.

GERRIT VAN ALST.

And if that honest man were here to-
day,

And bore for you the self-same heart
of love—

DAME M., (*excitedly*).

Stop! Is it Gerrit? Nearer! Quick,
your hand!

GERRIT VAN ALST, (*kneeling and
putting his hand in hers*).

And if his power reached but to the
flowers,—

A poor Dutch gardener,—

DAME M., (*eagerly*).

That I can mend!

Your life's ambition never climbed so
high

As I can build your path. Oh, Gerrit,
Gerrit,

Let me replace the hopes I helped to
shatter!

My brother holds high office in his
gift;

I pledge you now what would have
been your honors

Had vanity been artless long ago.

GERRIT VAN ALST, (*diffidently*).

One honor I would ask—

DAME M. That is ?

GERRIT VAN ALST. —Yourself.

DAME M.

You love me yet !—No, Gerrit,—I am blind.

GERRIT VAN ALST, (*quietly*).

And *I* am blind—to all the world but you !

Come, love is best that's tipped with bitterness.

(*Enter LOUISA with MATTY by the arm ; CAPT. G. behind, tipsy.*)

DAME L. Hurry, child ; it is very important and requires your immediate attention.

MATTY. But what *is* it, Aunty ?

DAME L., (*mysteriously*). I can't bear to tell you. Hurry back to the house with me. (*Seeing GERRIT and MARIAN embracing.*) Marian !!

DAME M., (*joyfully*). Ah, Louisa, I have found my first love, Gerrit Van Alst.

DAME L. What, that young countryman from up the North River?—the one that lodged in Petticoat Lane? Well, well! (MATTY *slily substitutes* CAPT. GLEN'S *arm in her aunt's grasp and is by him caught by the dress as she attempts to escape.*) I remember the first time he put on Dutch goloshes with us—(*approaches* GERRIT) you remember, we drove out to the Collect and it was all frozen over from one end to the other. And as soon as you started off over it, up went your heels and down you sat right on your hat!—And oh, what fun we had that night sliding down Flatten Barrack Hill! (*Discovers* CAPT. GLEN) Oh!!

GERRIT VAN ALST, (*laughing*).
'Zekiel! 'Zekiel! Judy!

JUDY, (*appearing around the corner of the house*). Yis, Marster.

GERRIT VAN ALST. Where's
'Zekiel?

JUDY, (*giggling*). He up in de loft, Marster, mixin' hoe cake. He 'lows as how I karn't do it no mo', so he tuk de kittle an' de big pan an' all de spoons an' paraphenia up to de loft. I spec'alates he gwine to cook some ambitions fer supper. He done gone put de big dough-pan up on a cheer, so when he harnds punch de meal it mos' like a bucket gwine down in a well !

(*Hubbub within. 'ZEKIEL heard crying*
"JUDY ! JUDY ! MASSA GERRIT !" *after which he appears at the door covered with meal and with dough-smeared fingers.*)

GERRIT VAN ALST. Ah ! Ambition gone astray !

(CAPT. GLEN *sits down to stare at 'ZEKIEL and rub his eyes.*)

CURTAIN.



[*The following plays were written for college actors.*]

A TRILOGY IN MINIATURE.

- I. My Youngster's Love Affair, Comedy;
- II. The Guardian Angel, Melodrama ;
- III. The Mild Monomaniac, Farce.

"I cannot blame his conscience."

HENRY VIII.

I.

MY YOUNGSTER'S LOVE AFFAIR.

CHARACTERS.

MR. ARKWRIGHT, *a practical business man ;*

HENRY ARKWRIGHT, *his four-year-old son ;*

MR. GRAHAM, *his old clerk ;*

THOMAS, *his butler.*

I.

MY YOUNGSTER'S LOVE AFFAIR.

SCENE—Parlor; mantel over bright grate fire, L; lamp on table in middle of stage; doors, LUE and RC; large arm-chair before fire.

(*Enter ARKWRIGHT, taking off ulster and giving it to THOMAS in doorway, RC*).

ARKWRIGHT. Thomas, hang my coat where it will dry; quick, quick!

THOMAS. Yes, sir; it's a bad storm, sir, but how much worse it is for old people that have to go out in it, sir.

ARKWRIGHT. Thomas, that's sufficient; run away. (*Exit THOMAS.*) Goodness, this weather is enough to

kill an Esquimaux! Sleet, rain, snow, wind, slush, ice,—three blocks' walk from the station fits you for three days in bed! (*Takes off spectacles and examines them by the lamp, then lays them on mantel.*) Spoils glasses, too; and my eyes feel as if they had been whipped. Thomas!—*Thomas!* (*Re-enter T.*) Where's Mrs. Arkwright?

THOMAS. She went next door, sir, to take some flowers to Mrs. Graham, and she's not returned yet.

ARKWRIGHT. Always attending that sick woman instead of staying at home and taking care of herself! Where's Henry?

THOMAS. She took the little boy with her, sir. He pleaded so hard to visit Mr. Graham's little girl, Prudence, that she had to take him. The two little tots were out just now in the covered alleyway (*pointing over his shoulder.*) They cleave to each other, sir,

like David and Goliah, and when their yellow curly heads are gossipin' away they look for all the world like two little angels flown down from the same star. Sure, their voices tinkle just as one, sir, and their darlin' faces look so much alike that—when they're *together* I can't tell them apart! But now Prudence has a big red cloak with a hood to it; it must have cost her old father some pinching to get it, sir. (HENRY *heard behind the scenes*: “Henry! Henry!” “Well, Prudence?” “Your mamma says you must put this cloak on, or else come right into the house again!” *Sufficient difference in his voice will be made if he faces in opposite directions for the call and response.*) They tell me, sir, you've discharged old Mr. Graham from his position, and——

ARKWRIGHT, (*impatiently*). Thomas, that's sufficient; run away.

THOMAS, (*retiring, but turning again to speak*). You know he's getting hard of hearing, sir, and he's none too strong.

ARKWRIGHT, (*annoyed*). Thomas, will you run away, or must I discharge you too?

THOMAS. Ah, Mr. Arkwright, you can't frighten your old Thomas that way. He knows your heart better than you do yourself, sir. Sure, he studied it before you ever knew you had one! Who was it dandled you on his knee? Who was it gave you the spoon and the bowl and let you have your own way with the bread and milk when they wanted to tie a bib around your neck? No, you've a good, kind heart, sir, and it grieves me to see you false to it with poor old Mr. Graham.

ARKWRIGHT, (*despairingly*). Will you run away, or must I leave the room?

THOMAS. Every one of us is sorry for him, sir.

ARKWRIGHT, (*rising*). Thomas, I'm not going to let you talk me into things any more! You forget that I am a grown man with a family.

THOMAS. He seems even more feeble since you told him——

ARKWRIGHT. Do you think I have only other people's welfare to look out for? Do you think my business would last a year if I answered every call upon my sympathy? Do you think——

THOMAS. And oh, the darlin' little girl, too, sir.

ARKWRIGHT. Do you——

THOMAS. And the poor sick mother.

(*Exeunt* ARKWRIGHT, L., and THOMAS, *with a gesture of despair*, RC.)

ARKWRIGHT, (*re-entering cautiously*). That man would talk down a cyclone! He seems to have no idea how business

matters are managed. Mercantile life is not a colossal philanthropy. Business is business. I can't afford to have a clerk that is growing deafer every day, and so old that he makes me look like an office boy. No, as Thomas says, my heart is all right, but this is no case for interference from the heart. For once I'll stand firm. Not all the persuasion or appeals under Heaven shall move me this time. I'll *not* change my mind! I'll *never* change my mind!

(*Door bell rings; re-enter THOMAS.*)

THOMAS. Mr. Graham would see you, sir.

ARKWRIGHT, (*in disgust*). Tell him I'm out.

THOMAS. Sure, sir, he knows you're in; and, besides, I've already told him so myself.

ARKWRIGHT, (*with resignation*). Well, show him in.

(*Enter GRAHAM, a dignified old man, plainly but neatly clothed in old-fashioned style.*)

GRAHAM. Mr. Arkwright, I beg you to excuse me for intruding.

ARKWRIGHT, (*in a business-like tone*). No intrusion at all, Mr. Graham.

GRAHAM, (*without hearing him*). Especially at a time when we are both worn out with the day's work.

ARKWRIGHT. I trust you are not—

GRAHAM. But I could not meet my wife——

ARKWRIGHT, (*loudly*). I trust you are not so very worn out.

GRAHAM. Eh?

ARKWRIGHT. I trust you are not so *very* worn out?

GRAHAM. Very warm out? Oh, no,—very cold indeed, sir. And I feel the cold more the last few years. When a man passes sixty-five, no matter how hale he was as a boy, he's

bound to feel the cold. And it is this growing old that makes my discharge all the harder to bear, sir. (*Keeps his hand at his ear throughout the rest of the interview.*)

ARKWRIGHT. Mr. Graham, I am sorry, but I have determined, once and for all, not to reconsider that subject. It is purely a matter of business expediency into which I have resolved no other consideration shall enter, sir.

GRAHAM. But, Mr. Arkwright, if I must lose the position, think of the hardship it will bring my wife and child. You have professed to love my little girl; you would not have her suffer?

ARKWRIGHT. She shall not suffer, sir,—but that is entirely aside from business matters.

GRAHAM. And your own child,—you would not make *him* unhappy. He will lose his playmate, for we can-

not longer afford our modest home. The children love each other, sir, and a separation would mean the first genuine sorrow of their little lives.

ARKWRIGHT, (*impatiently*). Mr. Graham, I can't let my youngster's love affairs interfere in a purely business question.—And anyway, it strikes me you assume a good deal in believing that Henry will not find another play-mate as attractive as Prudence.

GRAHAM, (*stung to the quick*). Sir, there is not one child in a hundred as amiable and sweet-tempered as my wee daughter ; and far from your little boy's fellowship being a condescension, sir, I would have you understand that our Prudence has more good qualities in a single day than Henry has from Christmas to Christmas !

ARKWRIGHT, (*angry*). How dare you say that, sir ? It is not true, and you know it !

GRAHAM, (*hotly*). Our little girl has never in her short life given us the least anxiety or displeasure, sir. We have not had to punish her even once ; she knows how to act according to our wishes, sir ; she has a conscience, while your boy—

ARKWRIGHT, (*emphatically*). I am that boy's conscience, sir !

GRAHAM. Then that proves what I would say ! I bid you good evening, Mr. Arkwright, and before leaving I desire to assure you that I have positively forbidden my child to cross your threshold hereafter, and I shall look to it that the children never again have occasion to meet.

(*Exit, RC.*)

ARKWRIGHT. What insolence ! That child better than Henry ! More amiable and sweet-tempered, eh,—just as if that was everything ! Henry is worth a dozen of her ! (*Walks about the room.*)

Extinguishes lamp, and takes a seat in big arm-chair before the fire).—I'm glad I discharged him; I'm only sorry I didn't do it ten years ago. More amiable! Humph!

(THOMAS *appears at doorway, RC, with HENRY wrapped in PRUDENCE'S red cloak. Enter THOMAS, groping his way.*)

THOMAS. Mr. Arkwright.

ARKWRIGHT. What do you want, Thomas?

THOMAS. Oh, did the light go out, sir?

ARKWRIGHT. Yes, and let it stay out. I've worked myself nearly blind to-day, so I'll rest my eyes here in the dark.

THOMAS, (*backoning HENRY in*). Well, a little friend of yours has just come in at the back door to pay you a visit, sir.

ARKWRIGHT. Who is it?

THOMAS. Just look at the cloak and hood, sir, and see if you can guess. (*Bringing HENRY in toward the light of the fire.*)

ARKWRIGHT. Prudence, eh? Humph! Father at the front door, daughter at the back door,—we'll have the invalid mother coming down the chimney next.

(*Exit THOMAS, R.C. HENRY seats himself, C, front, behind ARKWRIGHT.*)

HENRY, (*demurely*). My papa doesn't know I'm here.

ARKWRIGHT, (*ill-humoredly, without turning*). He doesn't?

HENRY. No.—I've another fairy tale for you.

ARKWRIGHT. Well, is it of the sort that Henry tells, or your variety,—all golden towers and elves with burning eyes in mountain caves?

HENRY. No. All the elves are little angels now.

ARKWRIGHT. Indeed.

HENRY. I'm going to begin it.

ARKWRIGHT. Well, I'm ready.

HENRY. Long, long time ago, when all the fences were of gingerbread, with candy flowers growing 'round them,—is that the kind of story you like best?

ARKWRIGHT. 'Tis very sweet.

HENRY. Yes. Well,—long time ago, when all the flowers were gingerbread and sugar, two little angels ran away from Heaven. And all day long they fed the birds with crumbs, and chased the squirrels 'round the trees, and laughed, until 'twas time to go to bed, and then a big old mother hen made room for them under her wing. But when the moonlight came, a naughty rooster made a dreadful noise.—You see, he thought the moonlight was the sun.—And then the little angels laughed at him and he got mad and chased one right away!

ARKWRIGHT, (*amused*). What a bad rooster!

HENRY. Yes. That little angel got lost in the dark until the daylight came, and then the other little angels up in Heaven came down to look for him and took him home.

ARKWRIGHT, (*beginning to feel uneasy*). And what about the angel that was left? Did he go back to Heaven?

HENRY. No, he couldn't; he didn't know the way alone. He cried and cried until he talked just like a chicken, and said "Peep! Peep!" and never tried to fly. So when the angels came to look for him, they found him just like any other chicken; and he grew up to be a big bad rooster.—Perhaps they'll kill him and cook him and eat him up.

ARKWRIGHT, (*uncomfortable*). It seems to me the angels up in Heaven would take him; for he'd ask them to.

HENRY. Oh no. He isn't like an angel any more ; he doesn't want to go, for he's a chicken. And chickens can't see angels, anyhow. (*A pause*). Can you see angels?

ARKWRIGHT, (*startled*). Oh,—I never tried.

HENRY. You have to shut your eyes and look real hard, and then you'll see them flying all around. Just shut your eyes,—I'll show you. (*Goes up behind the chair and puts his hands over his father's eyes.*) Now can you see them?

ARKWRIGHT. Why, hardly.

HENRY, (*reaching around farther.*) Now can you see them?

ARKWRIGHT, (*rising, and going to door, R.C.*) Well, if not, I certainly hear one, and to good effect.—Thomas!

THOMAS, (*entering*). Yes, sir.

ARKWRIGHT. Tell Mr. Graham I should like to speak with him ; ask him

to come at once. (*Aside.*) How could I think of parting those two children? That little lady's influence for my boy makes amends for any sort of father. And, after all, old Graham is honest as the day, and competent. He is old and deaf, but certainly my behavior to the father of such a child has been heartless to say the least. I wish I had thought about the children. However, I'll try now to make amends.—(*Raising his voice as GRAHAM appears, RC.*) Oh, Graham, come right in. I want to ask your pardon for speaking as I did. Fatigue and worry made me forget your feelings. And, Graham, I want to ask as a favor that you'll not move from your little home next door, or raise any objection to the children's companionship.

GRAHAM. I thank you, Mr. Arkwright, with all my heart, for these kindlier words. But now I must be-

gin my business life all over again ; we cannot afford to keep the house.

ARKWRIGHT. Nonsense ! *I've changed my mind !* You go right back to the office as usual to-morrow morning and I'll give you a small room all to yourself, where nobody will bother you, and I'll put a stove in there so that you will not feel the cold, and—

GRAHAM. Oh, Mr. Arkwright, this is too much ; I don't deserve this, sir ! I am not blind to my growing infirmity, and surely you must have seen it too, sir.

ARKWRIGHT. Graham, I've kept my business eyes open too much. Sometimes we can see better with our eyes shut ! Give me your hand ; you have my friendship, henceforth unchangeable. And if you want to know why I have taken better counsel in this matter, ask your little seraph there. I never knew till now her four

small years had grown so inseparably into my life.

GRAHAM, (*surprised and grieved*). What! Prudence disobey me and come here? Well, I must not blame the child until I know her motives. But to punish her now would make me cry as hard as ever in my life.

ARKWRIGHT. Why, I forgot. Here we are in the dark, like a couple of bats! Thomas!

THOMAS, (*entering*). Yes, sir.

ARKWRIGHT. Light the lamp again, Thomas.—And now, my little angel, where did you find that lovely fairy tale you entertained me with?

HENRY. Thomas told it to me.

ARKWRIGHT. Oho! Graham, Thomas is giving your little girl a course in angelic theology of a new order! You had better inquire into it this evening.

GRAHAM, (*looking at HENRY in surprise*). My little girl? That's Henry!

ARKWRIGHT. What? Thomas, bring me my glasses! So it is! Henry! (*Lifts HENRY into his arms and shakes his finger reprovingly at THOMAS.*)

CURTAIN.



II.
THE GUARDIAN ANGEL.

CHARACTERS.

HENRY, (*alias* THOMPSON), *and* ARTHUR, *his*
wayward brother.



II.

THE GUARDIAN ANGEL.

SCENE—Poorly furnished room in a tenement; table, chair, and two candles, one of them burning. Mantel and grate, L. Door, R. Henry, in rags, at work painting a china vase. Steps heard on the stairway. Enter Arthur, dressed in the height of fashion.

ARTHUR, (*singing, and a little tipsy*).
Home again, home again, from a
foreign shore!—No, I'm only half seas
over! Here, Thompson, *Mister* Thomp-
son, what are you trying to hide there?
Have you bought another loaf of bread
after getting one day before yesterday?
That's extravagance, man; do you
think we can afford an establishment
like the Vanderbilts', or buy three

loaves of bread in the same week? Besides, I've had all my dinners and three breakfasts out this month, and to-morrow I'll sleep until the twelve o'clock whistles blow, so we can get along with just a dinner. Come, let's see the size of it. (*Taking vase*). Oho! A china vase—and a little paint. Now Thompson, this is the second time I've caught you putting paint on these fine bits of crockery; what do you do it for?

HENRY, (*patiently*). I hoped to sell it; for you know we need money, Arthur. (*Lights second candle*).

ARTHUR. Money! Why, I draw my twenty dollars regularly every week from the bank. That hasn't given out,—though I suppose it must be getting low. How much is there left? You have the book.

HENRY. I fear there is very little left now. But let me take the vase;

you may drop it. There was a lady here to-day who said she would buy it.

ARTHUR, (*chaffing*). Aha! So you have ladies calling upon you, eh, while I'm away? Oh you gay rogue! Oh you rascal! Perhaps you're one of the boys, after all. And do they consider you a lady-killer, with that frowzy head and those blasé clothes? Thompson, Thompson! So you're only a carpet knight,—and *rag* carpet at that! (*Singing "Buy a broom," and dancing around with the vase.*) Oh, my little flower-pot, little finger-bowl, little tooth-mug, (*drops it*; HENRY starts to catch it and groans disheartened as it is shattered. ARTHUR becomes sober at once). Oh, I'm sorry, old man; (*regretfully*) I didn't mean to break it. But I'll get you another to-morrow, when I draw my twenty dollars for the coming week. That bill for cab hire

is not more than fifteen, and I'll let the house charges at the club run for another month. — Come, you're not hurt at what I said about your clothes, are you? It's only my way of teasing, and I know that under this old coat there is a heart that has proved a hundred times over that it loves me. Why, how could I have kept the pace these three years past if you had not guarded my expenses and provided a mouthful to eat and a poor substitute for a home when I chanced to be without a friend's hospitality for the night? Come, Thompson, old man, look up and tell me I have not wounded your feelings.

HENRY. Arthur, you know I have been a true friend to you, and true friendship does not seek offense. I have done my best for you, for I loved you,—perhaps some day you may know why. No; it is something else that makes me sad to-night. But tell me

once more about your early life.
(*Warming his hands at the grate.*)

ARTHUR. Oh, don't ask me to do that. Something has happened to-day to make the subject very painful to me. That's why I drank more than usual at the club before coming home, and, as a consequence, broke your vase. I've told you how when father died my brother tried to keep me steady and self-respecting; how I hated him and accused him of wanting my money, and at last ran off to seek pleasure in this city. Here I've squandered nearly all the funds father put in the bank to my account, and if I had not met you three years ago the fellows at the club would have found me out before this. As it is, they still think I am a wealthy man of leisure—confound it all!

HENRY. And your brother—do you still hate him?

ARTHUR, (*with mild surprise*). Why

do you want to know? You asked me that same question a long while ago, too. (*Approaching him.*) I have always made a confidant of you, Thompson, for you never preach,—unless by example—and, to be candid, I love you as the one true friend I have in this world, for you have proved it. (*Returning.*) As to my brother, I must confess that up to this very day my hate for him and every memory of him has had all the stinging bitterness of a rebel's. (*Gravely.*) But I want to confide a secret to you,—something I learned this afternoon. First, tell me what has happened to make you sad, and then I'll tell you what is weighing upon my mind.

HENRY, (*wearily*). No, Arthur, you begin; I feel tired to-night—I'll make a better listener.

ARTHUR. Not a bit of it! Come over here and sit by the table, (*rising*)

and I'll warm my hands while you talk.
(HENRY *feebly seats himself in the chair at the table.*)

HENRY. Well, shall I tell you my life story?

ARTHUR. Yes, do, old fellow. You know I've pressed you for it often enough; and I'm tired of hearing you say you're my guardian angel in disguise.

HENRY, (*dubiously*). Would you feel the same toward me after I had told you all?

ARTHUR, (*taking his hand*). Why, of course I should.

HENRY, (*earnestly*). You love me, Arthur?

ARTHUR, (*enthusiastically*). Could I help loving a comrade that has borne with all my faults, saved me a dozen times from utterly ruining myself, helped me to economize in private that I might still cut a figure in the world—and done all this without any other

motive than blind devotion? Thompson, dear old fellow, do you think I could be ungrateful?

HENRY, (*wistfully*). But—you *hate your brother*?

ARTHUR, (*conscience-stricken, returning to fireplace*). Go on; tell me your story; I'll answer no more questions till you do. Begin.

HENRY, (*sadly*). No; (*straightening up*), but you shall hear a dream I had last night; I thought I stood at Heaven's gate, watching the souls sent out into the world, like soldiers to a battle-field; and every soul as it passed into the night received an angel for a guardian and helper in the battle. The angel carried a bright sunbeam for a sword and marched ahead to clear a path and meet the deadlier blows. But one warrior, thoughtless, as it seemed, of the long fight to come, refused to follow where his angel led the way, and

turned aside to struggle in the dark. And when I looked at him I thought of one I loved—just such a soul—and joy flamed up within me when I saw his angel turn, accept his rash decision and follow in his footsteps, fighting for him. And now the blows hail heavier upon him, and, in the dark, enemies unseen before spring up. His angel battles with them, meeting the strokes the other could not parry, and every moment the conflict becomes fiercer. The soul I loved was moving on into a denser mass of enemies; his angel warrior, following at his back, found it ever harder to guard and fight for him, and when I saw his sword-strokes cramped and hindered I turned away and fell upon my face to pray that God would spare him. (*Convulsively buries his face in his hands.*)

ARTHUR, (*astonished*). Why, Thompson, my poor fellow, I never heard you

talk this way before. Why should a dream cause you to feel so deeply? And you have grown pale and haggard during the week. Have those friends that used to invite you out to a square meal so often, as you told me, grown weary of your company? Or, more likely, you've been keeping late hours, old man, and that's what makes you so tired too. But now brace up, for I want you to approve of something I did this afternoon. (*Returning to grate.*) I wrote and mailed three letters—one to Julia Mason, that rich banker's daughter, and the other two to the clubs. (*With cold determination.*) In those letters I stated plainly I had been acting a part, that I was poor and growing every day poorer; that I lodged with a good-hearted tramp even needier than I, and that when we dined at home—we never brushed the crumbs from the table. And now, I suppose

you wonder at my making a clean breast of everything, but I learned to-day that I've been a brute, and that my brother, instead of having squandered his money and gone to the bad, has reduced himself to penury in his efforts to find me and induce me to reform. To-day he is almost a beggar in this very town. (HENRY *feebly tries to speak*; ARTHUR *does not see him*.)

I'm going to start right out to-morrow and find him, and tell him that I'll do anything for a brother that can love like that! (HENRY *falls forward on the table. One of the candles, by a pre-arrangement, burns out*.) Don't go to sleep yet, old man; I haven't told you how I heard about him. As I passed a church to-day, old Nellie Cölgan, that benevolent crank father thought so much of, was just coming out. She knew me at once, in spite of the changes of ten years, and asked to

speak with me. Then I learned that in one of her slumming tours she had found Henry in abject poverty. He confided in her, it seems, but under a promise of secrecy as to his whereabouts. He is barely able to keep body and soul together by working early and late, because, for some reason, he has to put by a certain amount of money every week. With more delicacy than I gave her credit for, she admired his work, and told him that tomorrow she would call and buy something he was finishing, some decorative trifle—(*with a vague inkling of the truth,*) painting, I think,—on china! (*looking at broken vase, then hastily approaching table.*) Are you listening, old fellow—do you hear what I say? Wake up! Speak to me!! HENRY! (*Falls sobbing at his side.*)

CURTAIN.

III.

THE MILD MONOMANIAC.

A SCENE OF DOMESTIC VICISSITUDE

IN THE LIFE OF

MR. WILKINS,

AN AMIABLE LITTLE FAT MAN.



III.

THE MILD MONOMANIAC.

SCENE—A garret in disorder. Large sofa front, door, R, open dormer window with seat, C. A down comforter and a lot of old books in corner, L. A china jar near them. As the curtain rises a woman's dress is seen to swish out of the door, which closes with a bang. Mr. Wilkins, in profuse perspiration is seated on the sofa and holding a bundle of clothes which he has just taken from a trunk.

MR. WILKINS, (*alternately talking and fanning violently*). Amanda, if you're not very careful, I'll lose command of my temper! I should have remained a bachelor all my life if it had not been for Henry, that dear saintly brother of mine. And yet you find fault with me for talking about his

missionary labors in China, and for trying to conform our conduct to his high ideals. Do you realize that I should not have embraced the married state except to imitate his self-sacrifice? And then where would you have been,—and our three children, to say nothing of the baby? No, Amanda; I am mild, for Henry was mildness itself, but now I must put my foot down, just as I am sure Henry, if he were in my shoes,—yes, would put *his* foot down. I must—and I will go with you and the children to the circus! There! —(*Propitiatorily*) You couldn't take care of those four young ones, Amanda, all by yourself; and for Tommy, a boy nine years old, to look after his two sisters while you carry the baby, why,—Henry would say it was downright imprudence. Suppose they should go too near the monkeys, or the giraffe, or the elephant! Now, as for

my talking so much that you couldn't hear the clown,—I should think you would blush to acknowledge any liking for such talk as his. Anyway, he is a perfect stranger, and I am your husband.—Oh no; if I had suspected that under pretext of getting these clothes you brought me all the way up here to the garret just to talk me into staying at home,—I should have remained down in the kitchen just as long as it suited me. Do you realize that you have practiced a deception upon me? What would your saintly brother-in-law say to such an equivocation?—But I shall control my indignation, Amanda. Henry was mild, even under great annoyance, and I believe you are sorry,—though I think you ought to say so and not stay there silent so long. (*Soothingly*) I shall not say another word about it if you promise to be more considerate in

future. Try to conform your ideas of right and wrong to Henry's standard in such matters. I did not appreciate him properly until he left us for his missionary work in China, but since then I have tried to make amends. I gave up the club, I gave up smoking. I rose every morning at six and I went to house-keeping and got married. Oh Henry, my dear brother, I am trying now to imitate your self-sacrifice, but I hope you will soon come home to us from those barbarous lands,—that you will not be a martyr!—No, Amanda, I shall not rebuke you any farther, although you caused me to lose my breath climbing up those three flights of stairs on a hot day in August.—I say I shall not refer to the matter again.—Amanda, are you listening? (*Turns L, then R; looks back of sofa.*) What! Did you go *out* that time when you slammed the door. (*Angry.*) And have I been

talking to deaf ears, or rather, to no ears at all? Amanda, if you're standing out there on the stairs come in. (*Approaches door.*) Do you hear me? (*Tries the knob.*) Locked! The undutiful saucebox has locked her husband in the garret! (*Peremptorily, at door,*) Amanda!—(*At window, casually,*) Amanda!—Nothing in sight but Mrs. Johnson's calf. I wish they'd keep that calf down at their own farm and not let it stray up here around our back door. (*Indifferently,*) Amanda! (*Leaves window.*) Well, I must get out of here some way. I said I was going to that circus, and when I say a thing—although I'm as mild as a lamb under ordinary circumstances,—just like Henry, my dear, amiable brother! Oh, Henry, if you could only walk in here now and see how agitated I am,—and all because I took your advice to settle down.—I know what I'll do ;—I'll pick the

lock with my pen-knife. (*Approaches door.*) Stop! Is it right to pick a lock? Did Henry ever pick a lock? But then he was never shut up in a garret,—because he was never married. (*Reassured, resumes the picking. Then, despairingly, after looking through key-hole.*) She's left the key in the key-hole!—(*Loftily, retiring,*) Henry would never pick a lock; it would be beneath him; his conscience was too sensitive.—If it wasn't so far to the ground I'd jump out the window. (*Looks out.*) There's little Helen Johnson. Her folks might come and let me out. How did she come to stray so far from home? I suppose her people have gone to the circus, or her mother's cooking dinner. I wish she would wander over this way. (*Calling.*) Helen! Helen! Come, I want to speak to you! Helen! That's a nice little girl! Now, don't be afraid of the calf. The calf won't hurt you.

Oh, if I had something to fire at that monster! (*Jumps down and hunts about the room*). Here; Plutarch's Lives,—I'd give all he ever had for that calf's! (*Returns to window with armful of books and fires them out, first reading the titles.*) Alcibiades! Numa Pompilius! Caius Marius! (*Persuasively,*) Helen! Hel— Go away, you exasperating brute! Shoo! Come over nearer, Helen; I have some candy for you.—(*Aside.*) No, that's a lie; I haven't a bit of candy. Well, I'll correct that statement.—I haven't—that's right, come right along. (*With embarrassment.*) I was just going to tell you that I haven't any candy, but you go home and tell mamma to come and unlock my garret door, because I'm locked in and everybody's gone to the circus. Do you understand?—gone to the circus, where the monkeys are, and the elephant and the camels

and the horseback riders. (*Dances up and down by way of illustration.*) Now won't you go and tell her, like a good little girl? Run along and tell mamma—wait a minute, I'll give you something for being a good little girl. (*Jumps down, finds a rag doll and throws it out of the window.*) There's Tommy's old doll, Sophronia, and you can have her to keep. Now go and tell mamma. Here! Don't go that way! Go to mamma,—this way! *This way!* Oh, you tantalizing little imp! Strolling along in the other direction as if I had been merely playing Punch and Judy! Yes, now look around at me to make sure the show is all over! Never mind, I'll tell your mamma on you, and you'll get a good spanking, just like you got yesterday after dinner! *We heard you!* (*Throwing himself upon sofa and fanning violently.*) If I had a three year old child as stupid as

that one I'd give it an education abroad.—But there, I have sacrificed my equanimity, lost my temper over a calf, told a lie, and abused my wife. Oh Henry, I am not mild yet;—I am nowhere near your gentleness! What would you do now if you had forgotten yourself as I have? I know,—you'd follow your old rule and punish yourself in some way; but what can I do? I am already suffering imprisonment and perspiration. I suppose, if I had the courage,—I could intensify the heat a little. (*Looks hesitatingly at a pile of down comforters, etc.*) Henry, I WILL! (*Wraps himself in comforter and resumes his seat.*) No one shall say I lacked the courage of our convictions and I'll imitate you, Henry, in everything,—as far as Amanda is willing. Oh, Henry, if you could only walk in here now and see me following your example, you would know then how

sincerely your gentle goodness is esteemed! But you are far away in China, perhaps martyred, for no letter has come in six months; and I am home here in the garret,—hush! what step is that? I hear someone walking about down-stairs. (*Goes to window.*) Of course! Amanda has gone off and left the back door open.—It's a man's step! It's a burglar! He's going through all the rooms, one after the other! (*Foot-steps heard indistinctly.*) Burglars are dangerous, and always kill when they are detected! If I should call out he would come up here and kill me,—so I won't. He's on the floor below! Oh,—if he should find the garret stairs and come up! I'll arm myself and be prepared for the worst. If he comes in here I must defend myself. I'll hit him with this poker! It will do very well, provided he has no firearms. Let me get something to throw at him first;

—here, this jug is heavy. He might die from a blow with such a big piece of china,—*China,—where Henry is!* Good-by, Henry!—(*Steps become distinct and grow louder.*) He's found the garret stairs!—HE'S COMING UP! (*Hysterically standing on the sofa, with the comforter still about him, and brandishing the poker and the china jar.*) COME ON, VILLAIN, I'M READY FOR YOU! (*Key turns and door opens. Enter a long-faced dominie.*) HENRY!

CURTAIN.





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